

Missouri Assessment Program

**Communications Arts
Practice Test**

Grade 9

Student's Name _____
(please print first name and last name)

Teacher's Name _____
(please print first name and last name)

School District _____

Building/Room _____

Date _____

Form 41

Do not open test booklet until instructed to do so.

The First Snow-Fall

By James Russell Lowell

The snow had begun in the gloaming,
And busily all the night
Had been heaping field and highway
With a silence deep and white.

Every pine and fir and hemlock
Wore ermine too dear for an earl,
And the poorest twig on the elm tree
Was ridged inch deep with pearl.

From sheds new-roofed with Carrara
Came Chanticleer's muffled crow,
The stiff rails softened to swan's-down,
And still fluttered down the snow.

Carrara—white Italian marble

Chanticleer— rooster

I stood and watched by the window
The noiseless work of the sky,
And the sudden flurries of snow-birds,
Like brown leaves whirling by.

I thought of a mound in sweet Auburn
Where a little headstone stood;
How the flakes were folding it gently,
As did robins the babes in the wood.

Up spoke our own little Mabel,
Saying, "Father, who makes it snow?"
And I told of the good All-Father
Who cares for us here below.

The First Snow-Fall

Again I looked at the snowfall,
And thought of the leaden sky
That arched o'er our first great sorrow,
When the mound was heaped so high.

I remember that gradual patience
That fell from that cloud like snow,
Flake by flake, healing and hiding
The scar that renewed our woe.

And again to the child I whispered,
"The snow that husheth all,
Darling, the merciful Father
Alone can make it fall!"

Then, with eyes that saw not, I kissed her;
And she, kissing back, could not know
That my kiss was given to her sister,
Folded close under deepening snow.

The First Snow-Fall

1. What does the “scar” symbolize in “The First Snow-Fall”? Use two details from the poem to support your answer.

2. Describe the mood in “The First Snow-Fall” and explain how reading the poem affects your mood.

The First Snow-Fall

3. Analyze the importance of the setting in “The First Snow-Fall.” Use two details from the poem to support your answer.

4. Analyze the character of Mabel’s father using two details from the poem.

The First Snow-Fall

Alternate Constructed-Response Item

The word “snow” appears once in eight of the ten stanzas of the poem and in the title.

Why is “snow” important to the theme of the poem? Your response should include two details from either the poem and/or from your own personal experience with snow.

Circle the letter of the correct answer for Questions 5 and 6.

5. Who is the narrator of the poem?

- A. a neighbor
- B. Mabel
- C. the father
- D. the mother

6. Which literary device does Lowell use in the line, “The stiff rails softened to swan’s-down”?

- A. alliteration
- B. simile
- C. irony
- D. rhyme

The First Snow-Fall

7. Now you will write a paper in response to a writing prompt. First, read the prompt in the box below.

You will now have 45 minutes for your prewriting activities such as brainstorming, listing, outlining, and writing a rough draft. Use the pages in the test booklet labeled “prewriting” to record your ideas and your rough draft.

You will then have another 45 minutes in which to write your final paper. Use the pages in the test booklet labeled “final paper” to record your completed work.

For better or worse, nature can have a profound impact on human beings. Write a paper to your teacher describing how nature was helpful or harmful to you or someone you know in a particular instance.

Prewriting

[illegible]

Prewriting

[illegible]

Prewriting

[illegible]

Prewriting

[illegible]

Prewriting

[illegible]

Final Paper

[illegible]

Final Paper

[illegible]

Final Paper

[illegible]

Final Paper

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